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CONTROVERSY,

IN WHICH

IS EXAMINED,

WHETHER

*Every Man may be saved in his own
Faith and Religion?*

WRITTEN

By *Leonard Lessius* of the Society
of I E S V S.



Permissu Superiorum; M. D C . X I V .

The Printer.

GENTLE Reader, This Appendix of F. Lessius
to his Treatise intituled, of Consultation &c.
being sent me by a friend translated out of Latin into English,
I haue thought it conuenient to impart the same vnto thee in
Print: aswell for that it is a Controuersy of great importance
and most necessary for thee to know; as also for therin only
dōth seeme to consist thy euerlasting good or ill. Read it then
with attention, and thou shall not (believe me) repent thee
of thy labour.

THE



THE

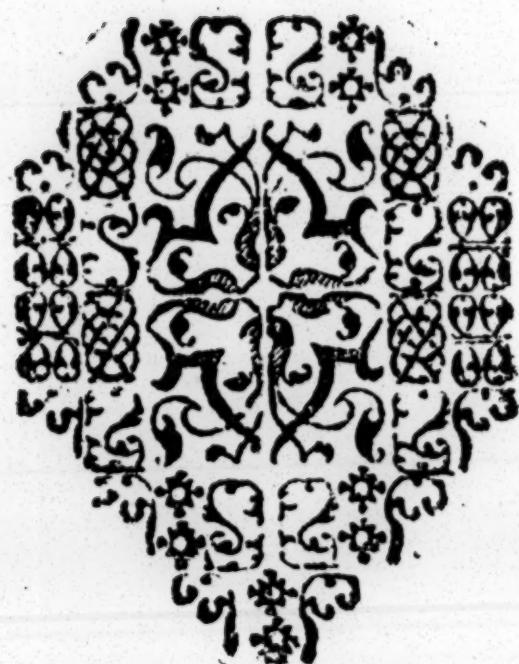
P R E F A C E .

WE haue before in the Preface of our *Consultation* set downe and briefely confuted a certayne grosse error, which holdeth it i-nough for our saluation to belieue in Christ, and that he died for our sinnes. But because it is much spread, and hath sunke deeply into the minds of many; I was requested to treate of the matter more at large, and therefore now I will deuide it into two seuerall Questions, bringing arguments for ey-ther part.

The first Question shalbe, Whether it be sufficient for saluation to belieue in God, and do no man iniurie? which is as much to say, as, whether euery man may be saued in his owne fayth which he professeth, if therin he endeauour to liue honestly?

The second Question, Whether it be
sufficiēt to saluatiō to belieue in Christ,
and that he dyed for our sinnes,
although we belieue not
many other articles
of fayth ?

THE





THE FIRST QVESTION.

ON CERNING the first Question many in these tymes do hold and are of opinion that euery man ma y be saued in his owne religion , & their principall reason wherwith they are moued to this, is because it seemeth vnto them incredible that all Iewes and Turkes , many of whom do deuoutly worship God , and deale iustly with their neyghbours, should perish for all eternity , only because they haue not believed in Christ, especially since for want of this beliefe they seeme not to deserue much blame , they being from their infancy trayned vp in a religion differēt frō Christianity. For why , say they, should God who would all men to be saued, so strayten the way vnto heauen? why should those miserable souls , who according to their capacity do their best to please him , do wrong to no man , and do lead a iust & honest life, be cōdemned to eternall payne for the ignorāce of that thing wherin they were never sufficiently instructed ?

The 1. Reason.

But this opinion of theirs, although in naturall reason it may seeme to carry some colour of truth and equity, yet considering those thinges which are reuealed vnto vs in holy Scriptures, it is a meere Paradox. For if euery Turke and Jew may be sauued in their beliefe, then in vaine haue the Apostles & holy Fathers so much laboured in preaching and planting of the Christian faith. In vaine so many Martyres by all manner and kind of torments haue shed thevr bloud, and spent their life in the confession therof. For they might haue abstayned from this doctrine and profession without any preiudice to thair saluation, and haue rested contented with the Iewes in the profession and acknowledging of on^e God. I add further: Then in vayne was Christ made man; in vayne did he worke so many Miracles, that so he might be acknowledged and belieued to be the Messias and Sauiour of the world; in vayne was he crucified, and dyed. For none of all these thinges was necessary to mans saluation, it being sufficient to send preachers about the world to perswade men the beliefe of one God. After this manner reasoneth the Apostle *Gal. 2.* If justice be by the Law, then in vayne (saith he) is Christ dead, which is as much to say, if Justice can be obtained by the knowledg of one God & obseruation of the Law, in vayne was Christ crucifyed, because

cause then the death of Christ had not byn necessary for our saluation .

The 2 . Reason.

Besides, hence it must necessarily follow, that the whole Scripture is false , since that it telleth vs how Christ is our Sauiour, Mediatour, & Redeemer , & propoundeth him vnto vs as a Propitiator by faith in his bloud , by whose Sacrifice we are reconcyled vnto God by his bloud , our sinnes are washed away, and with whose faith we are iustified . Neyther is there any other name vnder heauen giuen vnto men in which they ought to be saued . Thus speaketh the holy Scripture: and all this must needes be friuolous and false , if every man may be sauued in his owne Religion .

But some may perhaps obiect , that Christ is indeed our Redeemer , and that all our good commeth from him , yet his faith notwithstanding is not absolutely necessary . For it is sufficient that we belieue , that all our good cōmeth & proceedeth from the bountifull goodnessse of God vnto vs , neyther is it needfull for vs to know by what meanes it is bestowed vpon vs .

But this not only repugueth the holy Scripture, but also it is against the reason of the holy Scripture, because the layd holy Scripture doth euidently teach vs that Christs redemption is not applied vnto vs but by fayth , and therfore, all such as are destitut of the fayth of Christ

*VV*hether euery man may be sauued
are voyde of their iustification , and remay-
ning still guiltie of sinne, are the children of
wrath, and in danger of eternall damnation.

It repugneth to reason , because to the end
that we may become partakers of any great and
vnaccustomed benefit , all reason requireth , that
we acknowledge the benefit , and our benefa-
ctor , and that we honour him as it becometh
vs with all thankes-giuing: for both the cōditiō
of the benefit & of our benefactor doth require
of vs this gratefulnesse of mind. Seing that ther-
fore the benefit of our redēptiō is so great & vn-
accustomed and he who bestowed it vpon vs so
great and famous , as also the meanes wherby
he bestowed it vpon vs , so strange and meruay-
lous, it is requisit we should acknowledge all
these things , least we should liue and dye vn-
gratefull toward so great a benefactor , and least
instead of blessing & thāking him after the man-
ner of the Iewes, we curse & blasphemē him . It
is therfore an absurd thing , to esteeme those who
do not beleue in Christ, to be partakers of eter-
nall saluation prepared for vs by Christ . The
which also by this may be confirmed , because
none can be sauued who doth not know God , &
the benefit of his creatiō, for otherwise all Idola-
tors might be sauued: neither therfore can he be sa-
ued, who doth not know the benefit of his re-
demption, because the benefit of our redempti-
on is farre greater and more admirable , and doth
more appertayne to the Glory of God , and of
Christ our Redēemer , and requireth also of vs
greater

greater honour, seruice, and thankes-giuing.

Neyther is it sufficient for vs to know in generall that all good thinges come vnto vs from God, for this is not sufficient for the honor and gratitude which is dew vnto him, but we must also know what and how great the benefit is, as also by what manner, way, and meanes he bestowed it vpon vs: that is to say, that he hath deliuered vs from sinne, and euerlasting death, and that he hath opened vnto vs the way to eternal life, & that after a most admirable manner, to wit by ioyning our nature vnto his, and by suffering therein death for vs. For this especially commendeth his charity, mercy, and iustice, this also exacteth at our hands all dewty prayse, and thankes-giuing, these therefore are most necessarily to be knowne to saluation.

The 3. Reason.

If euery one may be sauued in his owne fayth, then therfore that fayth is sufficient to saluation which is not a gift of God, but an humane perswasion, conceyued by our priuate iudgement, relying vpon humane authority, and built vpon a deceitful foundatiō. For the Turkes, although they belieue one God to be the Creatour of heauen & earth, & to be the rewarder of both good and euill workes, their faith notwithstanding is not of the holy Ghost but of their own priuat iudgment, or rather of the diuell: for they do not belieue so, because God hath revealed it vnto

to whether every man may be saued
men by any true Prophet , but because Ma-
homet, whome they thinke to be the Prophet
of God , and his istrument to teach mortall
men, hath so set it downe in his Alcoran . Albeit
therefore that which they believe be true , yet
because the ground of their beliefe & the whole
reason therof is false , and pestilent , to wit , that
Mahomet is a Prophet of God ; the faith it selfe
wherby they believe , is deceytfull , and the
foundation therof whereupon it is grounded
is hurtfull to saluation , necessarily inclining &
forcing the mynde to caste it selfe into all the
pestiferous errors of that sect . How therfore
can that faith be called sufficient for them vnto
saluation , or that they can be saued by that faith ?
How can that which is vncertayne , deceitefull
pestiferous , be made the foundation of our iu-
stice before God , or of eternall saluation ?

In like manner , albeit the Iewes do believe
the same , or rather more thinges agreeable vnto
truth , yet the faith wherby they do believe them ,
is deceytfull and voyde of the spirit of God . For
the whole reason or cause of their beliefe is , be-
cause the Rabbyns and Doctors of their Syna-
gogue , do so interpret the holy Scriptures vnto
them . For they are the rule of their beliefe , or
which is all one , the holy Scripture , as it is sub-
iect to their interpretation . But this whole rea-
son of their beliefe is deceytfull , and no lesse
hurtefull and dangerous then that of the Turkes :
for it is no lesse hurtefull to believe , that their
Rabbyns interpreting the holy Scriptures are

indewed with the spirit of God, then to belieue that Mahomet is the Prophet of God: neither are they drawne into iessler absurdityes by the force of that principle. How therfore can that faith be the foundation, or ground of saluation?

The 4. Reason.

Finally this opinion maketh no difference betwixt Turcisme, Iudaisme, & Christianisme, but in some few indifferent matters, and nothing necessary vnto saluation; in so much that it is all one in what religion thou liuest; seing that thou maist indifferently in all of them obtayne thy saluation; the which is nothing els, but to open the way to Alcoran, and to make Mahomet equall with Christ, or rather manifestly to bring in Atheisme. For to appoue euery Religiō is to take away all Religion, and to thiuke none necessary, seing that the true Religion can be but one.

The fundamentall reason wherupon this opinion especially relieth, is of no moment. For first, if it be not incredible that God for the space of some thousands of yeares hath left the whole world in Idolatrie, excepting only the lewish natiō being but a little portiō or corner of the whole world, and to haue permitted it to be vterly overthowne, albeit there were so many rare wits among them, so many diligent worshippers of God, and all humane iustice, and honesty; it should not also seeme incredible, if we say that

now

Secondly, the Turkes and Iewes are lesse
to be excused now, in that they do not belieue
in Christ, then the Heathens were in tymes
past in not acknowledging one God to be the
Creator of heauen and earth. The reason is,
because when almost the whole world was in
Idolatry the feruēt heat of the common custome
carried all by force away with it: neyther was
there any reason offered vnto priuate men why
they should greatly doubt of their religion: ney-
ther if there had byn doubt obected vnto them,
could they find out any easy way to know the
truth. But now after that the fayth and Reli-
gion of Christ diuulged throughout the whole
world, and that Christians are euery where ex-
tant, it cannot be, but that many occasions are
offered vnto the Turkes and Iewes of doubting
of their Religion. They are bound therfore to
discusse, and conferre the matter with the Chri-
stians dwelling nigh vnto them; the which if
they do not, but auert their minds from these
kinde of thoughts, by reason of the hatred they
bearc vnto Christian Religion, or vpon some
other cause, they make theselucs vnexcusable be-
fore God: for the busines of our Religion & salua-
tion is of so great weyght and importance, that
it ought to be preferred before all other things, &
when there is any iust reason of doubting offered
it must withall diligence be examined, albeit
we should for that purpose be forced to go into
farre

farre countries for our resolution.

Lastly, if there be any who haue hard no-
thing of Christian Religiō, or which do thinke
that there is nothing wherby they may be iustly
moued to any further inquisition, those men
shall not be damned for the sin of Infidelity,
that is to say, because they haue not belieued in
Christ, but for some other things, which they
haue done agaynst the law of nature, the
which by help of God they might haue esche-
wed, for God hath not left the so destitute of his
prouidence, and help, but that they may auoid
those synnes which they do commit, if they
would, as they may & ought to cooperate with
Gods holy inspirations, and take comfort and
pleasure therin. None therfore can impute his
damnation vnto God, albeit the way be straite
to saluation, but vnto himselfe, to his owne
negligence, I say, and wickednesse, wherby he
hath neglected Gods holy inspirations, and con-
temned his profitable admonitiōs, and willing-
ly and wittingly against his owne conscience
hath throwne himselfe headlong into sinne, it
being his vtter ouerthrow.

THE II. QVESTION.

THE other Question is, whether it bē
sufficiēt to saluatiō to belieue in Christ,
and that he dyed for our sinnes, albeit
we will not belieue many other things.
Many, especially of the common sort of
people

*VV*hether euery man may be saued
 people do ettēme it sufficient, so that those
 thinges be beliued which are set downe in the
 Apostles Creed, of God and Christ, other things
 they account indifferent, and euery one may
 believe what with a good faith he pleaseth, but
 they will haue the Apostles Creed beliued of
 euery one, in that sense which seemeth best
 vnto any of them. They conclude therfore, that
 any which confesseth Christ may be saued in
 his owne faith, whether he be a Papist, or a Lu-
 theran, or a Caluinist, or an Anabaptist, or
 of any other sect, for all these haue the same head,
 which is Christ, all do rely vpon the same fun-
 dation the which is Christ Iesus; they can-
 not therfore be deceyued of their saluation albeit
 they disagree in all other thinges. Hereupon some
 noble men who do vse these new religions to the
 establishment and encrease of their power &
 dominions doe labour very much to make one
 Church of the Lutherans and Caluinists, and
 they goe about to perswade vs, that there is noe
 difference amongst them, but in some smal points
 & indifferent matters.

But this opinion doth include in it many
 inconueniences.

The 1. Reason.

First, because it saueth almost all the auncient
 Heretikes: for most of them do confess
 Christ & belieue the Creed in their owne sense.
 The Arians therfore might be saued in their
 heresy

heresy who denyed God the Sonne to be con-
substantiall with his Father, The Macedonians
who made the holy Ghost lesler then God
the Sonne. The Nestorians who affirmed there
were two persons in Christ. The Eutichians
who held, that the flesh of Christ was conuer-
ted into his diuinity. The Apollinaristes who
said, that the diuine Worde was vnited in
Christ, as a reasonable soule vnited to the
body. The Monothelites, who affirmed that
there was one only wil and operation in Christ.
The Pelagians, who denied originall sinne,
and taught that a man by his naturall forces
might deserue the grace of God, and his saluatiō.
The Donatists who affirmed, that the Church
of God was euery wher perished, but only in Do-
natus his company. The Nouatians who denyed
pennance to those that had denyed their fayth.
The Montanists who thought Montanus to be
the holy Ghost. All these according to this opi-
nion euery one in his owne fayth and heresy
may be saued, because they haue belieued in
Christ, and did hold the Apostles Creed no lesse
to be belieued, then now a dayes the Lutherans &
Caluinists do. But what can be sayd more absurd
or more like a paradox in the Church of God?
For if eternall saluatiō may be obtayned by this
kind of fayth, why haue there byn holden so
many Councells against thole heresies, the Bi-
shops through-out the whole world being as-
sembled togeather with so great labour and
charges? why haue thole heresies byn often con-
dem-

demned by excommunication ? why haue the holy Fathers so much laboured in the extirpation thereof ? why haue Catholikes so much detested the conuersation and company of those heretykes ? why would some of them rather chosen to suffer banishment, death, and all kind of torments then to subscribe vnto any of these heresies ? All these things truly had byn done in vayne, foolishly, and wrongfully, if in these se^tects eternall saluatiō might haue byn obtaineid : the which seing no wise man can say, we must of necessity confess, that those heresies are the plagues of soules, and that saluation can by no meanes consist with them.

The 2. Reason.

Secondly, because it condemneth all antiquity of error, who hath alwayes iudged, that an heretike cannot be saued, and therfore it hath opposed it selfe so vchemently against them, and hath alwayes very diligently confuted them.

The 3. Reason.

Thirdly, because it condemneth the Apostle himselfe, who in his third to *Titus* commandeth vs in this sort : Eschew an heretike after onc or two admonitions, knowing certaynly, that he which is such a one, is ouerthrown, and sinneth being condemned by his owne proper iudgmēt. Why doth he command him to be eschewed, if

his error be not a hindrance to saluation? why doth he say, that he is ouerthrowen and cōdemned? In like manner in his 2. to Tim 3. *Their speach (sayth he) creepeth as a canker.* Euen as therefore the cāker is a disease which killeth a mans body valesse it be cut away, euen so is an heretike vnto a company of Christians and Catholikes.

But some peraduenture will obiect, and say, that none is to be accounted an heretike but he which reiecht Christ or denyeth some thing belōging vnto the Creed. But this is absurdly, & unwiseely spoken, for so he shold not be an heretike who shold take away both the old, and new testament, and shold say, that those things are eyther feygned, or written by the spirit only of a man, and as the writings of prophane authors subiect to many errors: he were not an heretike who shold deny hell, or the eternity of the paynes thereof, or shold affirme that all the duells shold once be saued, seing that there is no mention made of these things in the Apostles Creed: he shold not be an heretike who shold forbid marriage, and who shold say, that marriages were ordyned by the Diuell, who also shold affirme that some kinde of flesh is of it owne nature yncleane; all whom notwithstanding the Apostle iudgeth to be heretikes 1. Tim. 4. He were not an heretike, who shold say that there are two persons in Christ, whom notwithstanding S. Iohn calleth an heretike, and Antichrist Epist. 1. c. 4. He were not an heretike who shold deny Baptisme, and all other Sacraments. And finally none of those of whomie

VVhether euery man may be sauued
 we haue spoken before, were to be accounted
 Heretikes, the which is contrary to all anti-
 quity, & all the Doctors who haue liued in these
 ten or twelue ages.

The 4. Reason.

Fourthly, this opinion doth make all the
 foresayd heresyes, and sects equall with the Ca-
 tholike faith and Religion, affirming that we
 may alwell be sauued in them as in it. The Ca-
 tholike Religion therefore shall be no better then
 Arrianisme, Pelagianisme, Nestorianisme, Eu-
 tichianisme, & other false Religions, the which
 both in it selfe is most absurd, and is nothing els
 but to induce a new Atheisme. For to affirme
 all Religions to be good, and that it little im-
 porteth the worke of our Saluation what Reli-
 gion we professe, is to make no account of any
 Religion, for if there be any Religion it cannot
 be but one, as there is but one truth, one Justice,
 one Faith, one happines, one Lord and God, &
 one Man Iesus Christ, mediator of God and man.

The 5. Reason.

Fifthly, it is a skornefull thing to say that it
 is sufficient for euery one to belieue the Creed ac-
 cording to their owne sense and vnderstanding
 therof, seing there is but one only truth, the wh^{ch}
 if we do not attayne, we belieue that which is
 false: but a false faith auayketh nothing to saluati-
 on. It is therefore all one whether thou belieuest
 the Creed after such a maner or after no maner at
 al: one therefore may be sauued albeit he doth not
 absolutely belieue many articles. The same also

may be said of the holy Scriptures. For if it be sufficient to belieue the holy Scriptures vnderstood in their owne sense, seing that this sense may often tymes be erroneous; it will also suffice albeit thou doest not belieue them at all, for a false faith can be no more needfull to saluation then no faith at all, that is to say, whereby one doth absolutely belieue nothing at all.

Yf thou docit say, that the Creed must be belieued in a true sense, then thou condemnest all the sects of this tyme, wherof there is none which belieueth all the articles of the Creed in the same sense with Catholikes, or which doth not differ one from another in the explication of the Creed. Wherfore seing that there is but only one truth, it necessarily followeth that all Religions sauing one doe erre from the truth &c therefore are not sufficient to saluation.

But it is euident, that they differ much in the vnderstanding of the Creed, for that Article, *And in Iesus Christ his only sonne*, the Arians, Tritheans, and many Caluinistes affirming the Sonne lesser then the Father, doe otherwise explicate then the Lutherans, and Catholikes do, who hold God the Sonne to be equall and consubstantiall with his Father. The article of Christ's descending into hell, the Calvinists do otherwise vnderstand, who do thinke that Christ suffered there the torments of the damned soules, and that he doubted of his saluation, and that he was affrayd least he should be wholly consumed by euerlasting death: otherwise Catholikes and Lutherans, who say, that such an exposition is

not the sense of the Article, but a blasphemy of Caluin. The article of Christes ascending into heauen, is otherwise vnderstood, by the Lutherans, and Vbiquitarists who hold Christes body to be present euery where and in all places, as his diuinity is present euery where: otherwise the Caluinists and Catholiks who doe not doubt to affirme but y^t by this expositio the whole Creed is ouerthrowne, and that Christes Incarnation, Natiuity, Passion, death, ascending to heauen, and his comming to Judgment is thereby quite taken away. The article of *judging the quicke, and the dead*, the Catholikes do otherwise expound, who hold that God shall so judge vs that he will reward our good workes with heauen, and punishe our euill deeds with hell: otherwise the Caluinists, and Lutherans, who deny all reward to good workes, and that God only in his diuine iudgement will principally esteeme, and reward a speciall fayth only. The article of *the holy Ghost*, the Chatholikes, and Lutherans do otherwise vnderstand then the Arrians, and many Caluinists. The article of the *Church*, the Lutherans and Caluinists do vnderstaud of the invisible congregation of those which are predestinated: the Catholikes do vnderstand it of the visible company of Catholiks, wherein many are predestinated, many are reprobated. The article of *Communion of Saynts*, the Lutherans, and Caluinists do so extenuate that they take away almost all the communion holden by Catholiks. The article of *remission of Synts*, they explicate of not imputation only, not acknowledging

ledging any inward renouation by inherent iustice, and the infused gifts of God, after which manner the Catholikes do hold that sinnes are forgiuen.

By these it is manifest, how great a difference there is in the vnderstanding of the Creed. Seing therfore that there is but only one truth, & this in our Consultation we haue shewed to be among Catholikes, it necessarily followeth that all other sects do hold a false doctrine, and fayth of the Creed. If therefore a true fayth of the Creed be necessary, it cannot possibly be that euer y one may be saued in his owne fayth, and Religion. If a false fayth suffice, how can a false fayth help vsto saluation?

The 6. Reason.

Sixtely, the holy Scripture is of no lesse authority then the Apostles Creed, neyther doth he a lesse iniury vnto God, who denyeth any thing clearly expressed in holy Scripture, then he which reiecteth some article of the Creed: there is therefore no reason why fayth should be restrayned vnto the Creed only, and that we may belieue at our pleasure in all other things what we list, seing that we are no lesse bound to belieue all thinges conteyned in holy Scripture then the articles of the Creed: for albeit we are no bound to know distinctly all such things as are in holy Scripture, we are bound notwithstanding in generall to belieue all thinges; insomuch that without the sinne of heresy we may not reiect as false and doubtfull, any

VVhether euery man may be sauued
thing conteyned therin . By what colour ther-
fore or probability can it be said , that it little
importeth , how in other matters thou belie-
uest , soe that thou belieue still in Christ and
his Creed . Why must the Creed rather be still
kept then all the holy Scripture , seing that the
authority of the Creed is no greater then that of
the holy Scripture ? this fancy truly is very foo-
lish and simple , and altogeaither voyde of any
good ground wheron it may rely .

The 7 . Reason .

Seauenthly , in euery act of faith we must
not only regarde what we do belieue , but also
and that principally , vpon what ground we be-
lieue , and what is the whole reason of our belief ;
for of what kinde the motiue or reason of our
belief is , of the same is our faith : if it be
certayne and infallible , our faith will also be
certayne and infallible : if it be vncertayne , our
faith also wil be vncertayne , and subiect to error ,
as for example sake : The Turke belieueth there
is one God Creator of all thinges , because his
Alcoran doth teach him so , the which he thin-
keth to be written by the spirit of God : his faith
albeit he belieue that which is true , relyeth v-
pon a false and deceytfull reason , by the force
whereof he is moued to belieue many false and
blasphemous thinges , as that there are not iiii
Persons in the B . Trinity , and that Christ is
not God , and that Christ is inferiour to Maho-
met , and that Circumcision and the like are still
to be kept . That faith therfore by reason of the

founda-

foundation is both deceitfull and hurtfull : the same hapneth vnto al herctikes; the which being supposed I vrge the argument in this manner.

That faith which relyeth vpon a false foundation, albeit it belieueth some things which are true, cannot be sufficient to saluation : but the faith of al the sects of this tyme relieth vpō a false foundation ; it cannot be therefore sufficient for saluation . The first proposition is manifest in it selfe , for how can that which is deceitfull and vncertayne be the foundation of our eternall saluation ? How can the true Religion whereby we please God, be grounded in a false deceitfull faith ? Truly it is no lesse repugnant to reason, then if thou shouldest say, that truth is grounded vpon lyes , wisdome vpon error, and vertue vpon folly .

The second proposition, to wit , that all sects are grounded vpon a false and deceitfull foundation, I proue in this manner: for cyther they belieue their opinions for the authority of their Apostles Luther , Caluin , Melancthon , Zwinglius &c . whom they iudge to be endewēd with the spirit of God , or because euery one of them in their owne priuate iudgement do belieue those things to be cōteyned in holy Scripture , or lastly because their owne priuate spirit doth inwardly testify vnto them, that those things are true , or that this is the meaning of holy Scripture: for whatsoeuer the sectes of these tymes do belieue they are moued therevnto by one of these thre reasons , and they appoint one of them to be the foundation or reason of their

*VVhether euery man may be saued
by beliefe, but these foundations, and reasons be al-
together false and deceitfull.*

As for the first reason, to wit the authority of Luther, Caluin, and the rest who first inuen-
ted these new Religions, that it is deceitfull, it is
manifest, because we see by experience that both
hey might, and haue byn often deceyued, for
hey haue reuoked many things, corrected many
things, and in many things haue they contradi-
cted theselues, as hath byn declared in our Con-
sultation of Religion in the 9 Consideratio, and
the sixt reason. Hence it commeth to passe that
few now adayes will rely vpon their authority,
because they say, they were men, and therefore
subiect to error, wherfore their followers also do
leave them at their owne pleasure when they
thinke they haue found any thing fitter for their
purpose: their authority therefore is deceitfull, &
vncertayne, euen by the iudgement of their
owne schollers, and followers.

Neyther is the other, to wit, the priuate iudg-
ment, whereby they expound the holy Scripture,
lesse deceitfull: for many false thinges by that pri-
uate iudgement seeme to be true, & many things
which before seemed true are afterward judged
false. Frō hence ariseth so great variety & incō-
stancy in many of the cōcerning matters offaith,
because indeed mans iudgement is weake, especi-
ally in the mysteries of our fayth, and the vnder-
standing of holy Scripture, the which far exceedeth
the reach of mans wiſdome and reason.

Many do answeare, that they do not rely vpon
their iudgment in matters of fayth, but vpon the
holy

holy Scriptures which cannot erre, wherin how miserably they are deceiued by this appeareth, because almost all the sects do say that they rely vpon holy Scripture, wheras notwithstanding they differ among themselues in most of the matters, one teaching contrary vnto another, the which could by no meanes come to passe, if they did not rest vpon their owne judgments, but vpon the lawfull and common vnderstanding of the holy Scriptures, for the holy Scripture is no where contrary vnto it selfe, neyther doth it any where disagree frō it selfe: that therefore they so greatly jarre & disagree among themselves, is caused, by that they make a felse to the holy Scripture according to their owne priuate judgment, the which is diuersly framed by them, according to the diuersity of iudgments & vnderstanding among them: they rely therfore vpon the holy Scripture, not as it is interpreted by the Catholik Church & the holy Fathers, but as they in their priuate judgment do interpret it, for the vertu & force of the holy Scripture doth not only consist in the bare words, but in the sense and meaning thereof, but the priuate judgment inuenteth this sense, and ioyneth it to the words of the Scripture as lyfe vnto the body: the whole reason of their fayth therefore is their priuate iudgment, the which how deceitfull oftentimes it is, may easily be declared by the disagreement of so many sects, for it is all one whether thou saist, that thou reliest vpon Scripture as it is interpreted by thy proper iudgment, or y^t thou reliest vpon thy owne iudgment precisely in it self.

Finally, the third reason whereupon many

VVhether every man may be saued
 now a dayes do rely, is most deceitful & skornful
 of all, a manifest signe wherof is that among the
 Anabaptists, which aboue all others are guyded
 by the instinct of the spirit, there is the greatest
 variety of sects, & disagreement of faith, the whch
 could not be, but that the spirit wherupon they
 rely, & by whome they are gouerned is deceitful
 & variable. The same also is to be seene among
 Caluinists, and Lutherās, & amongst their sects
 & diuers factions, for their owne opinion is cer-
 tayne & cuide vnto euery one of the by the testi-
 mony of their owne priuate iudgmēt, the which
 inwardly teacheth euery one of them and affoar-
 deth the testimony of truth vnto euery one of
 them, whereby it is manifest that this spirit is
 not the holy Ghost, the spirit of truth, who can-
 not teach contraryes, or be opposite vnto it selfe,
 but it is a wicked spirit, the spirit of error who
 is a lyar from the beginning & the father of lyes,
 who worketh in the children of incredulity, of
 whome the Apostle saith, *Because they haue not receiv-
 ed the charity of truth, he will therefore send them the ope-
 ration of error, that they may belieue in lyes.* And in other
 place. *In the last dayes there shall some depart frō their saith
 attending to the spirits of error, and doctrines of the diuellis.*
 For every heresy is the doctrine of the Diuels. And S. Iohn
 saith, *Do not belieue euery spirit, but try their spirits whe-
 ther they be of God or not. For many false Prophets are gone
 out into the world.*

This therfore is the spirit which beareth rule
 in the harts of heretiks, whose testimony & ope-
 ration they feele inwardly engrasted in their harts,
 & yet they thinke it to be the worke of the holy

Ghost

Ghost, who so blindest & peruertereth their mind, & tanies, that they iudge light to be darknesse, & darknesse light, y^t they think the most clear truth of the Catholike faith to be an error, & most filthy errors to be the cleare truth. And truly if they were not wholly blinded & bewitched, they might easily perceiue that spirit whom they feele inwardly, not to be the spirit of God, or at the least they might begin to doubt therof, seeing that all sects among whom there is so great dissencion & variety of opiniōs, do al equally feele, boast of & follow ye testimony of this spirit, & rely vpō it in the cōfirmatiō of their most cōtrary opiniōs: but this hapneth by the iust iudgmēts of God: for as ye Iewes who would not reccieue Christ were permitted to be blinded by the diuell, as it is manifest by the *Apost. 2. ad Thes. 2.* so heretiks because they haue forsakē the Catholik fayth(the which is no lesse fault thē that of the Iewes) are deliucred vnto him that he may as it were bewitch their minds & driue them into all kinds of error.

But if any will attentiuely consider he shal easily perceyue a more potēt operatiō of the diuell & bewitching of mindes in our Heretiks thē ey-ther in Iewes or Mahometās, & y^t for two reasōs. First because the Iewes agree in the same faith, nei-ther is there any variety of sects among them: a-
mong the Mahometts there are only two sects & there is no great difference betwixt them. But a-
mōg heretiks of these tymes there are many sects,
some arising by the ēcrease of new opiniōs, who
condemne one another of heresy, & all these are
risen within the space of 90. yeares, the w^{ch} is a

manifest signe, y^t the diuel meruaylously posses-
seth inwardly the hartes of these men, troubling
their fates, peruerting their imaginacions & iudg-
ments, y^t they cānot remayn or be quiet any wher.

Secondly, because the cōmon sort of people a-
mong the Iewes & Turkes do not rely vpō their
owne iudgmēt, or vpō the testimony & instinct
of the priuat spirit, but vpō the iudgmēt of their
doctors, or (w^{ch} is all one) vpō their owne Scri-
pture, as it is interpreted vnto thē by the doctors
of their Religion; they haue therfore the rule of
their faith & ground of their beliefē cōformable
as it were to natural reason, that is to say the cō-
mon cōsent of their predecessors, or the Scripture
explicated vnto thē by the cōsēt of the doctors of
their Religion. But most of the heretikes of these
tymes do not respect their Superiors & Apostles
frō whom they first receiued this new Ghospel,
but they forsake thē as men subiect to error, and
they rely wholy vpon their owne iudgment, or
vpō the testimony of the priuat spirit, or w^{ch} is
al one, vpon the holy Scripture vnderstood accor-
ding to the sense of their owne iudgmēt & priuat
spirit, the w^{ch} is an euident signe, that Sathan doth
so effectuallly worke in them and bewitch their
myndes, that not only euery one feygneth vnto
himselfe new heresies & opiniōs, but also that he
placeth the foundation of his beliefē & rule of
faith in himself, & in his owne inward sense &
iudgement: for euery one thinketh himself to be
caught by our Lord & indued with the Magi-
sty of the spirit, albeit they be womē & yong
girles, & therfore to be free from error, but all the
holy

holy Fathers to haue byn men subiect to errors. The same they iudge of their Apostles & Ministers. But what greater bewitching or deceiuing of people can there be, then this? Hence it commeth to passe that they haue no certaine & establisched opiniōs amongst thē, neyther can they set downe or frame any body of doctrine & religiō, but they must wander vp & downe in vncertainties, as the priuate spirit leadeth thē; neyther can there any disputatiō be made wth thē cōcerning their opinions, seeing that they do not defēd any one opiniō, they being by reason of the ignorāce of their prodecessors altogeather vnlearned. But of this spirit of folly & madnesse we haue writte more at large in our Consultation in the 9. consideration the 11. reason.

By these it is manifestly cōcluded that all the ground & foundation of faith wherupon the sects of our tymes relye, is false & vncertaine, and therfore their faith which relyeth theron is vnprofitable & auayleth nothing to saluation.

The 8. Reason.

Eightly, if euery one, who do acknowledge Christ may be saued in their owne faith, Why is there so great disagreemēt among religions? Why do they excōmunicate & condemne one another of heresy? Why do ye Lutherās refuse to acknowledg the Caluinists for their brethren: & in their publike sermōs & books do call them wicked & blasphemous persons? Why do the chiefe of the Caluinists, amōg whome Theodore Beza, ye Father of thē all, & as it were their Pope next after Caluin, handle the Lutherās in like māner?

why

Whether euery man may be sauued
why do the Anabaptists call those only of their
owne sect, to be the faithfull, and Christians, &
account all others as infidels? whereby it is euident
that this new opinion of doctrine is not only cō-
trary to Catholike religion, but to all other sects
also who haue in them any zeale of pycy and re-
ligion, and to be banished as Atheists only.

The 9. Reason.

Ninthely, that any man be sauued, it sufficeth
not to keepe only one, two, or three cōmandmēts,
but it is necessary to keep all, according to those
words of Christ *Math. 19.* *If thou wyl enter into life*
keep the commandments. As if any be an adulterer or
thief, albeit he keep y^e other cōmādmēts he may
not be sauued, as the holy Scripture oftē teacheth.
In like maner therfore it is not sufficiēt to salua-
tion to beleue two, three, or fower articles, but
it is necessary to belieue al those things w^{ch} God
hath reuealed and set downe to vs in his Church
to be belieued, for faith is no lesse necessary to sal-
uatiō then obediēce of the cōmandments of the
law of God: neither should faith be lesse perfect
thē the obediēce & keeping of the law of God.
As therfore obediēce must extend it selfe to al the
commandments, so must faith extend it selfe to al
things which are reuealed; the which may be cō-
firmed by the words of S. James in the 2. Chap. *V.* *ho-*
soever hath ket the wholl law, but offendeth in one, he is made
guilty of all: for he who sayd, thou shall not commit adultery,
said also thou shall not kil, as if he should say he is made
guilty of al & shall be punished as a breaker of the
whol law, because he hath despised the law-ma-
ker, who is the author of the whole law. In like
man-

māner therto he which shall deny one article although he belieue al the rest is made guilty of violating his whole faith & Religion, because he contemneth God who is the first truthe, who no lesse reuealed this then the other: he contemneth the Catholike Church the spouse of Christ, who is the pillar & strength of truthe, wherby he hath no lesse determined we should believe this then y^e other. And this is the reasō why he is no lesse an heretike who with pertinacy denieth one point of faith, thē he which denieth a hundred, because in that he denieth one, he contemneth God, who is the first truthe & did reueale it, he contemneth the authority of the Church the w^{ch} did propose it vnto vs, he maketh y^e Church subiect to error & a liar, wherby he is made also vncertaine of al the rest, & looseth all his diuine faith: for the ground of his diuine faith being taken away his whole faith must needs perish & cōsequētly therē remai- neth only an opiniō or humane fayth, subiect to error wherby he belieueth all the rest.

The 10. Reason.

Tenthly & lastly this opiniō is very dāgerous in y^e practise therof, for it maketh a man that he ca- reth not what religiō he hold, what he belieueth or not belieueth, he doth not therfore seeke after y^e truthe, & he doth as easily & with a great secu- rity lay hold on false as true things, yet al mē not ſoly Catholiks but euē the more principal ſects, & thofe w^{ch} are learned wiſe men do abſolntly af- firme y^t none can be ſaued without the true faith & religiō, & whosoeuer are depriued therof ſhall perish for cuer. The followers therfore of this opini-

opiniō are cōdemned of all, & they only promise vnto thēselues saluatiō without any author, testimony or reasō for it, relying & trusting oly in their own vain imagiatiō of their foolish brain: let thē therfore heare out of S. Fulgētius what antiquity hath alwaies holdē, & what the Catholike Church hath taught in al ages. Thus therfore he writeth, setting downe the rules of our common faith in his booke of Fayth ad Petrum Diaconum, the 38. Cap. Believe assuredly (saith he) and doubt nothing at all, that not only all Pagans, but also all Iewes, Heretikes and Schismatikes who shall dy out of the Catholike Church shal go into euerlasting fire which is prepared for the diuels & his Angells. And in the 39. Cap. Believe assuredly and doubt nothing, that euery heretik or Schismatik christned in the name of the Father, & of the sōne, & of the holy Ghost, if he be not within the nūber of those which ar of the Catholik Church, what almes soeuer he hath made, albeit he shall shed his bloud for the name of Christ, can by no meanes be saued: for neyther baptisme, nor large & charitable almes, nor death it selfe suffered for Christes sake will auayle that man, who doth not hold the vnyt of the Catholik Church, as long as his hereticall or schismatycall wickednesse which leadeth to perdition, shall continue in him.

This hath always byn the faith of the Catholike Church, & the most certayne & vndoubted doctrine of the holy Fathers: the which I would to God al those who remayne out of the Church of God would attentuely & diligently consider; they would truly easily perceiue in how dangerous a state they continue. Thou, O Christ, being the light of the world, shyne vnto their myndes & lighten their hartes. Amen.

FINIS.

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